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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Second Committee (Part VII)*

Rapporteur: Mr. Basheer F. ZOUBI (Jordan)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 95, sub-items (f), (g), (h), (i), (j) and (k) (see A/50/617, para. 3). Action on sub-item (f) was taken at the 40th and 42nd meetings, on 30 November and 8 December 1995. An account of the Committee's consideration of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/50/SR.40 and 42).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS A/C.2/50/L.46 AND L.66

2. At the 40th meeting, on 30 November, the representative of the Philippines, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Women in development" (A/C.2/50/L.46), which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 40/204 of 17 December 1985, 42/178 of 11 December 1987 and 44/171 of 19 December 1989, as well as all other relevant Assembly resolutions on the integration of women in development,

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* The report of the Committee on this agenda item will be issued in several parts, under the symbol A/50/617 and addenda.

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 47/180 of 22 December 1992, in which it decided to convene the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) from 3 to 14 June 1996, and to establish both a preparatory committee and an ad hoc secretariat for the Conference,

"Reiterating its gratitude to the Government of Turkey for offering to act as host to the Conference, which is to be held in Istanbul,

"Noting with satisfaction the progress made so far in the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), as outlined in the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference on its second substantive session, 1/ as well as in the report of the Secretary-General on preparations for the Conference, 2/

"Reaffirming the importance of the principles and concepts set out in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development 3/ and Agenda 21 4/ for the purpose of implementing the decisions and recommendations of Habitat II,

"Recalling also its resolution 49/109, in which, inter alia, it decided that a third substantive session of the Preparatory Committee be held at United Nations Headquarters early in 1996 to complete the preparatory work for the Conference,

"1. Endorses the report of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) on its second substantive session (Nairobi, 24 April-5 May 1995), 1/ which contains, inter alia, decision II/1 on the financing of the Conference and its preparatory activities; decision II/3 on the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee on the organization of work of the Conference, including the holding of pre-conference consultations on 1 and 2 June 1996, the establishment of committees and other procedural matters; and decision II/4 on the rules of procedure for the Conference;

"2. Decides that the third session of the Preparatory Committee will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 26 February to 8 March 1996 (rather than from 5 to 16 February 1996) to finalize the

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1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 37 (A/50/37).

2/ A/50/519.

3/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.18 and corrigenda), resolution 1, annex I.

4/ Ibid., annex II.

provisional agenda for the Conference and to formulate the draft global plan of action to be adopted by the Conference, including a statement of principles and commitments as an integrated part of the plan of action;

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to make the necessary provisions, within existing resources, so that the Preparatory Committee may, if it so decides, establish two working groups to meet in addition to plenary meetings for the duration of the third session;

"4. Reaffirms that the Conference should have the dimensions of a 'city summit' and should be held at the highest possible level of participation, as affirmed in its resolution 49/109 of 19 December 1994;

"5. Expresses its sincere appreciation to those States and organizations that have made or pledged financial or other contributions in support of the preparatory activities for the Conference, and renews its appeal to those that have not yet done so to contribute substantially to the voluntary fund, which was established by the Assembly in its resolution 47/180 for the purpose of financing preparatory activities for the Conference, in order to facilitate the full and effective participation of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, at the third session of the Preparatory Committee and at the Conference itself;

"6. Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the role of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and the outcome of the Conference;

"7. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-first session a sub-item entitled 'United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)' under the item 'Sustainable development and international economic cooperation'."

3. A statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.27 submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, was contained in document A/C.2/50/L.44.

4. At the 41st meeting, on 5 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Conor Murphy (Ireland), introduced a draft resolution entitled "United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)" (A/C.2/50/L.57), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.27, and orally revised it as follows: In the fourth preambular paragraph, in the last line the word "implementing" was replaced by the words "guiding the implementation of".

5. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.57, as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 9).

6. After the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.57, a statement was made by Turkey (see A/C.2/50/SR.41).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE

7. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Women in development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 40/204 of 17 December 1985, 42/178 of 11 December 1987 and 44/171 of 19 December 1989, as well as all other relevant Assembly resolutions on the integration of women in development, and the resolutions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women on the integration of women in development,

Bearing in mind the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and other recent major United Nations conferences and summits,

Recognizing the significant contribution that women make to economic activities and the major force that they represent for change and development in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas, such as agriculture, industry and services,

Reaffirming that women are key contributors to the economy and to combating poverty through both remunerated and unremunerated work at home, in the community and in the workplace, and that the empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries have resulted in the rapid feminization of poverty, especially in rural areas and in female-headed households,

Aware that the continued discrimination against women, their continued lack of equal access to education and training, and their lack of control over land, capital, technology and other areas of production impede their full contribution to and opportunity to benefit from development,

Recognizing that the informal sector is a major source of entrepreneurship and employment for women in many developing countries,

Noting the importance of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in facilitating the advancement of women in development,

1. Welcomes the adoption of the Beijing Declaration 4/ and Platform for Action 5/ by the Fourth World Conference on Women;

4/ A/CONF.177/20, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

5/ Ibid., annex II.

2. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the effective mobilization and integration of women in development; 6/

3. Calls for the urgent implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action as well as the relevant provisions contained in the outcome of all other major United Nations conferences and summits;

4. Stresses that a favourable and conducive international and national economic and financial environment and a positive investment climate are necessary for the effective integration of women in development;

5. Also stresses the importance of developing national strategies for promoting sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities to generate income among disadvantaged women and women living in poverty;

6. Calls upon all Governments and all actors of society to implement the commitment made in Beijing to create an enabling environment through, inter alia, removing discriminatory barriers and ensuring the full and equal participation of women in economic activities through, inter alia, the adoption of gender-sensitive policies and legal measures and the provision of other necessary structures;

7. Urges all Governments to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources, and to increase women's access to credit by instituting innovative lending practices, including practices that integrate credit with services and training for women, and that provide flexible credit facilities to women, in particular rural women, women in the informal sector, young women and women who lack access to traditional sources of collateral;

8. Urges Governments to develop and promote methodologies for incorporating a gender perspective into all aspects of policy-making, including economic policy-making;

9. Calls upon the United Nations system, in particular its funds and programmes and specialized agencies, and all other relevant organizations to promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming gender perspective in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes;

10. Urges the international community, the United Nations system and other relevant organizations to give priority to assisting developing countries' efforts to ensure the full and effective participation of women in deciding and implementing development strategies, including through increased access to health care, capital, education, training and technology, as well as by women's wider participation in decision-making;

11. Urges multilateral donors, international financial institutions and regional development banks to review and implement policies in support of national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach women, in particular in rural and remote areas;

6/ A/50/399.

8. Invites the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the Conference undertaken by the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, including the role played by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements in that process;

9. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-first session a sub-item entitled "United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)", under the item "Sustainable development and international economic cooperation".

10. The Second Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the regional commissions on the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) at the regional level

The General Assembly decides to take note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the regional commissions on the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) at the regional level. 10/

10/ A/50/411.